

notwithstanding rule XXII, following the vote on cloture on S. 2199, the Senate proceed to executive session and vote on cloture on Executive Calendar Nos. 1003 and 1004; further, that if cloture is invoked on either of these nominations, on Tuesday, September 16, at 2:15 p.m., all postcloture time be expired and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order upon which cloture was invoked; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote, and all rollcall votes after the first vote in each sequence be 10 minutes in length; further, with respect to the nominations in this agreement, that if any nomination is confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE EBOLA CRISIS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, over the past several months the world's attention has been focused on the Russian invasion of Crimea and fighting in the eastern Ukraine, the explosion of violence in Gaza, the flood of migrant children from Central America, and the horrific death and destruction in Iraq and Syria.

In each of these places vast numbers of innocent people have suffered terribly, and our own policies and capability to respond have been severely tested.

Yet one of the most urgent, difficult, and frightening challenges facing the world today is not the result of armed conflict or ethnic or religious extremism. It is the world's first Ebola epidemic, and it poses a potentially devastating threat to Africa and people everywhere.

Before the August recess we were preparing to receive dozens of African heads of state to Washington. At that time, Doctors Without Borders and other nongovernmental organizations had been ringing alarm bells for weeks about the worsening Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

But the World Health Organization and governments, including our own, were slow to respond to what was viewed as a manageable, localized public health problem, rather than a crisis that could spin out of control.

No longer. Infections and deaths in Liberia and Sierra Leone are increasing rapidly, with exponential acceleration in these countries and potentially in neighboring Guinea. Official reports

may be only a piece of the picture. The ability of these countries to locate, diagnose, isolate and treat patients, trace and monitor contacts, and safely bury the dead cannot possibly keep pace.

Unfortunately, the lack of urgency exhibited by much of the international community was exacerbated by budget cuts at the World Health Organization, for which there is ample blame to go around. After the 2009 global financial crisis, WHO's budget dropped by roughly 1 billion dollars, nearly 25 percent of their budget today.

By the time of the current Ebola outbreak, staff levels at WHO had been cut by 35 percent, and their ability to prepare for and respond to health emergencies suffered accordingly.

Today, the Ebola crisis has the full attention of the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USAID, President Sirleaf of Liberia, and other governments. They recognize that unless aggressive, coordinated actions are taken immediately, there will soon be tens of thousands of cases, the disease will spread into much of Africa, and it will be an ongoing global threat for many years to come.

The challenges are immense: weak government institutions; dysfunctional public health systems that cannot conduct reliable disease surveillance and response; lack of roads and other basic infrastructure; ethnic and political divisions in societies recovering from war; misconceptions about the disease and low levels of literacy; and inadequate and uncoordinated international aid.

While the epidemic is finally beginning to receive the attention it deserves, it is spiraling out of control. Huge numbers of cases are overwhelming local capacity to isolate and treat patients, trace their contacts, and safely bury the dead. The cost of personal protection gear is exorbitant and there is an acute shortage of trained people.

Also, the secondary effects of this crisis are increasingly apparent. Food insecurity is worsening and the economies of these countries, already fragile, are facing collapse as imports and exports are plummeting.

We and others have the knowledge and tools to contain and control this disease if cases are quickly isolated and contacts identified, but actions to date have not been well coordinated and have not always addressed the most urgent needs.

Just as for a raging wildfire, the focus should be on deploying all available resources to provide immediate support for urgent needs identified on the front lines to stop its spread, while there is time. It will require mobilization of the type and complexity as occurred after the Haiti earthquake.

In West Africa, that means immediately scaling up staff, transport, isolation and treatment capacity, infection control including personal protec-

tive equipment for health workers, funding through rapid and flexible funding mechanisms, training and supervision, laboratory services, communications resources, and management and logistics support.

There is nothing new about this approach. But it is required on a far larger scale than was used to control Ebola outbreaks in the past.

The situation today is grave, but we can prevent many of these deaths. And as we do so we need to help build stronger public health systems that can contain future disease outbreaks.

Past efforts to build capacity have clearly been woefully inadequate. As public health systems in these countries have been overwhelmed by Ebola, patients suffering from malaria, TB, pneumonia, and other illnesses are unable to get treatment.

We should all pay tribute to the courageous public health workers who have risked their lives—and in many cases, lost their lives—trying to save others from this terrible disease. It is inspiring to read the stories of nurses and doctors, and those who dig the graves and bury the dead, who have labored on as their colleagues have died, who live with the daily reality that at any moment they could be next. They are as brave as any soldier on the front lines of battle.

I also want to commend President Sirleaf, her Minister of Defense, and others who have tried their best to deal with this unprecedented emergency in the face of woefully inadequate resources.

The United Nations says that \$600 million is needed immediately to fight this disease. The United States has already provided tens of millions of dollars. USAID announced another \$75 million last week. The White House has requested additional funding for CDC, which would bring the U.S. contribution to over \$250 million.

The Department of Defense announced that it will provide logistical, laboratory, and other support. The World Bank has pledged over \$200 million. Other governments are also coming forward, as are private donors. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation recently pledged \$50 million to enhance response efforts and accelerate research on potential treatments and vaccines.

The Congress has a role to play, and I am hopeful that as additional funds are needed we will act responsibly and provide them. I am a cosponsor of S. Res. 541, which recounts the history of this outbreak and the steps that are urgently needed to control it. I commend Senators COONS, DURBIN, MENENDEZ and others who introduced it. This is not a partisan or political issue. It is a public health issue, a moral issue, and one that should unite us all to do what is necessary to defeat this epidemic.

REMEMBERING JAMES M. JEFFORDS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier this week, the Senate passed a resolution recognizing the life and career of Senator Jim Jeffords. This Vermont icon passed away over the August recess, nearly 8 years after concluding a decades-long career in public service. That career, marked by historic moments on the national stage, was one in which Vermont came first. I ask unanimous consent that an article from the Burlington Free Press, "Tributes pour in for Vermont GOP giant Jeffords," be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Jim and I came to Washington together in 1975, he to represent Vermont as our lone Member in the House of Representatives, and I as Vermont's first Democratic Senator. But our years working together go back further, to the days when I was a State's attorney in Chittenden County, and he the State's attorney general. Our families knew each other. Marcelle and Liz knew each other well, having both attended Cathedral High School in Burlington. Both Jim and I would readily acknowledge that our wives were the hearts and souls of our families.

That longtime relationship served us and Vermont well when Jim came to the Senate in 1989. Together, we worked to protect Vermont's dairy farmers, to preserve Vermont's celebrated natural landscape, and to give Vermont a strong and powerful voice in Washington.

I joined many Vermonters in celebrating Jim's life last month in his home town of Rutland. Our sympathies are with his children Laura and Leonard, and his grandchildren.

Jim was a humble man, a Vermonter through and through, and a true friend. His legacy is that he held Vermont in his heart, and worked to advance the best interests of his constituents on the national stage.

For that, this Vermonter will join many others in simply saying, "Thanks, Jim."

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, Aug. 19, 2014]

TRIBUTES POUR IN FOR VERMONT GOP GIANT JEFFORDS

(By Sam Hemingway)

The Jim Jeffords For Governor campaign camper was headed up U.S. 2 toward East Montpelier in the summer of 1972 with the candidate behind the wheel.

"He almost drove off the road," recalled Bruce Post of Essex, who was aboard the camper as a just-out-of-college campaign volunteer. "He was the world's worst driver."

What Post also remembers from that day is that Jeffords, Vermont's attorney general at the time, telling him about a decision Jeffords had made to give no special treatment to a powerful Republican who had run afoul of Vermont's environmental laws.

"He told me that day, 'It might cost me my political career, but it's not going to cost

me my political conscience,' " Post remembered Monday, the day Jeffords died.

Jeffords did lose the primary, but he went on to serve seven terms in the U.S. House and three in the Senate. In 2001, his conscience led him to leave the GOP, a stunning move that shifted control of the chamber to the Democrats.

Monday, Jeffords died shortly after 7 a.m. at Knollwood, a retirement home for military veterans in Washington, D.C. He was 80 and the last Republican to hold federal office elected from Vermont.

"While we are saddened by our father's passing, we take comfort in the knowledge that he lived a full life, from the hills of Vermont to the halls of Congress," Laura and Leonard Jeffords, the senator's son and daughter, said in a statement. "We will miss his kindness, his good humor, and his generosity of spirit."

Jeffords, afflicted with Alzheimer's disease, had been in declining health and had lived at Knollwood since retiring from his Senate seat in 2006. Jeffords was a veteran of the Navy and the Navy Reserve, but never served in combat. Jeffords' wife, Elizabeth Daley Jeffords, died in 2007.

News of Jeffords' death Monday morning, first reported by the Burlington Free Press, quickly spread across the state and the nation.

"Jim never lost the fiercely independent spirit that made Vermonters, and people across America, trust and respect him," President Barack Obama said in a statement.

"Whatever the issue—whether it was protecting the environment, supporting Americans with disabilities, or whether to authorize the war in Iraq—Jim voted his principles, even if it sometimes meant taking a lonely or unpopular stance."

In Vermont, Gov. Peter Shumlin mourned Jeffords' death. Flags at public buildings across the state were lowered at half-staff and will remain so through Saturday.

"The passing of Senator Jim Jeffords will be felt throughout Vermont and our country," Shumlin said in a statement. "We need more like Senator Jeffords. My heart goes out to his children and extended family."

THE MAVERICK

Jeffords' maverick political instincts served in him good stead as he navigated Vermont's shifting political currents over 40 years, emphasizing his moderate positions as the state leaned increasingly toward more liberal, Democratic positions.

As a House member, he was the only Republican to vote against President Ronald Reagan's tax cuts in 1981. In 1991, he voted against George H.W. Bush's nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court. He supported President Bill Clinton's health care reform and, in 1999, voted against his impeachment.

"He was a partner in our work for Vermont, and he was a friend," Sen. Patrick Leahy said of Jeffords in a statement. "He was a Vermonter through and through, drawn to political life to make a difference for our state and nation. Part of his legacy will also stand as an enduring chapter of the Senate's history."

Leahy and Jeffords both won their first elections to federal office in 1974 and were rivals for a time. They grew closer over the years as they worked on dairy issues and others important to Vermont.

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., who won the election to replace Jeffords in 2006, said Jeffords was a common-sense Vermonter who accomplished a lot.

Sanders toyed with running against Jeffords in 2000 but decided against it and said Monday he would have passed on challenging

Jeffords had Jeffords run for re-election in 2006.

"Vermonters admired him because of his low-key and down-to-earth qualities, and because of his obvious and strong love of the state and the Vermont way of life," Sanders said. "He was an effective champion of education, disability rights, the environment and the arts—and millions of Americans have benefited from his efforts."

Rep. Peter Welch, in an interview, spoke of how Jeffords and his wife helped him during his successful run for the House in 2006, and then in Welch's early months as a freshman congressman.

"He spoke softly but got a lot done," Welch said of Jeffords' career. "There are colleagues of his in the House who still remember him with great respect."

Former Republican Gov. Jim Douglas said Jeffords "will be long remembered as a Vermonter who gave his all and his best in every season of his storied career. As a friend, I will miss him dearly."

Republican Lt. Gov. Phil Scott said he fashioned his career after the example set by Jeffords. "He did what he felt was right, not what he felt would make him popular," Scott said.

THE SWITCH

Jeffords' decision to become an independent in 2001 rocked the nation. His move changed the balance of power in the Senate, which had been 50 Republicans and 50 Democrats.

The move cost his GOP colleagues their committee chairmanships and, for Jeffords, the loss of several lifelong friendships.

"I have changed my party label, but I have not changed my beliefs," Jeffords said in his May 24, 2001, speech at a jam-packed Radisson Hotel in Burlington where he announced the switch.

"Indeed, my decision is about affirming the principles that have shaped my career. I hope that the people of Vermont will understand it. I hope in time that my colleagues will as well. I am confident that it is the right decision."

The move catapulted Jeffords to rock-star national prominence, praised by Democrats and vilified by Republicans.

He wrote later that even members of his family opposed his decision. Sen. Trent Lott, R-La., and a member of the Singing Senators quartet along with Jeffords, fumed that Jeffords had carried out a "coup of one."

In the aftermath, Jeffords appeared on the covers of Newsweek and Time magazines in the same week. He also was the subject of several death threats, requiring required him to receive Capital Hill police protection for a time.

Back home, he was treated as a flat-out hero. His decision to leave the GOP spawned a popular "Thanks, Jim" bumper sticker and a special-edition beer called "Jeezum Jim," a reference to his modest nature and Vermonter accent.

"I have never been prouder of anything I've done in my life than being with him at that time, the time preceding the announcement and the time after that," said Eric Smulson, Jeffords' spokesman for 15 years. "How he handled himself, how he stood for his principles. He was a great statesman, a great Vermonter, but an even better person."

Others, including close friends and some Vermont Republican leaders, were distraught about the 2001 decision.

"I was very upset over it," said James Johnston of Montpelier, a former Jeffords campaign adviser and close personal friend. "But I know he had good reason to do it at the time."

Johnston became emotional describing the loss of his old friend.